

MA THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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PRESS RELEASE

KENNETH SNELSON: PANORAMIC VIEWS OF VENICE
February 27 - April 28, 1985

American sculptor and photographer Kenneth Snelson's fourteen panoramic color photographs of Venice, taken at sunrise in the summer of 1982, offer startling new perspectives on the city's buildings, canals, piazzas, and narrow streets. To make his Venetian panoramas, Snelson used a Widelux camera which yields 140-degree negatives. By cropping and joining three consecutive images, he obtained a 360-degree view in one long scroll-like picture, about six inches high by four feet long. These panoramas, with their precise details and multiple viewpoints, where buildings press forward and canals and alleyways dramatically recede, give us the sensation of seeing in all directions at once.

Venice's labyrinth of passageways and unexpected corners are particularly vulnerable to Snelson's imaginative efforts to penetrate the city's sense of mystery and discovery. He captures the rich browns of ancient stones and the pink light of early morning as beautifully as the city's unsettling spaces.

Kenneth Snelson was born in Pendleton, Oregon, in 1927. He studied painting and sculpture at the University of Oregon and The Institute of Design in Chicago, then with Josef Albers and Buckminster Fuller at Black Mountain College in North Carolina and at the Fernand Léger Academy in Paris. From 1952, when he came to New York, until 1968, when he was at last able to support himself by selling the aluminum tubing and steel-wire sculptures for which he is best known, he made his living as a cameraman for documentary films. Panoramic photography became important in his work in 1975, when he began to produce a series of 360-degree views of cities, first Paris, then New York, and now Venice. The photographs in this exhibition, lent by the Zabriskie Gallery, New York City, will be on view from February 27 through April 28, 1985.